

VZCZCXRO8933
RR RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #3589 3171340
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 121340Z NOV 08
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0347
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 003589

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/11/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: UNAMI'S DE MISTURA CONCERNED OVER POSSIBLE PRT
DRAW-DOWN

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) In a brief meeting with the visiting Joint Campaign Plan Assessment Team (JCPAT) on October 20, UNAMI SRSG Staffan de Mistura expressed considerable concern over the negative impact of possible military/PRT drawdowns on UNAMI operations in the provinces. He pointed out that UNAMI's expanded mandate requires more personnel on the ground and greater visibility. UNAMI is in the process of co-locating at five PRTs (Basrah, Najaf, Anbar, Ninewa and Kirkuk) and depends on MNF-I for off-FOB movements. He reminded the group the 2003 Canal Hotel bombing still colors the UN's security stance, and that without MNF-I support, especially at the PRTs, it would be difficult for UNAMI to fulfill its expanded mandate. Except in Erbil and Najaf, UNAMI has been unable to identify Iraqi security forces able to protect its personnel out in the provinces.

¶2. (C) De Mistura is particularly concerned about the PRT in Kirkuk. The military drawdown there will greatly harm UNAMI's ability to oversee a disputed internal boundary (DIB) resolution, the cornerstone of its mandate. UNAMI may also be called upon to assist in implementing Article 24 of the Provincial Elections Law, which calls for a power-sharing agreement among the Kurds, Arabs and Turkomen in Kirkuk in advance of provincial elections there. Both of these are extremely volatile issues that UNAMI will not be able to address without security assistance from MNF-I.

¶3. (C) Comment: In a 45-minute meeting designed to brief the JCPAT on all of UNAMI's projects, it is striking that the SRSG spent a significant portion of that time discussing basing issues. He commented on the often-heard belief that, as the U.S. presence draws down and PRTs are consolidated, UNAMI will be able to step in and fill the gap. He corrected that belief, stating, "If you go, we go." While we encourage UNAMI to fulfill its mandate, it is important to keep in mind that it will only be able to accomplish this through co-locating at PRTs. We do not see the PRTs disappearing any time in the near future, and are working closely with MNF-I as it considers its re-basing options to ensure support for civilian activities where PRTs are located, pointing out that the security situation is only part of the assessment. To that end, the Office of Provincial Affairs and MNF-I led a meeting to discuss Kirkuk support issues on October 31. Solutions for the short term were identified and recommendations for the long term have been forwarded to Commanding General Odierno. The Commanding General has directed MNF-I to provide the needed security and movement support specifically for UNAMI in Kirkuk and for UNAMI operations in general moving forward. Life support and movement will be provided to ensure both the PRT and UNAMI can fulfill their mandates. We will do a similar review for each PRT. End Comment.

CROCKER